

SIMILE ZOLA, NOVELIST AND
EEFOEMER 347

to do so. "Whether Zola had arisen or not, it was fatal that the novel should at last embrace many things which earlier writers of fiction had never dreamt of including in it, that it should, in a word, follow the trend of the modern mind,

Among writers, moreover, there are always many whose aim is not mere amusement. Some openly declare instruction, enlightenment, to be their purpose. Some are only half conscious of their mission, some not at all, and it happens not unfrequently that a lesson is conveyed in books where it has been never intended. At one time the drama was the form of literature which appealed most successfully to the greater number. The novel at last acquired a similar position, and it followed that the writer who wished to reach the greater number had to approach them as a novelist. That had been done long before the time of Zola, who was both a writer with a purpose and one who wished to reach the majority. Now, if an author desires to bring about some reformation of the community, it is natural that he should begin by portraying it. If he wishes to elucidate certain social, scientific, and psychological problems for the common good, it is essential that he should in the first case state them. In that event, say some pedants, he must confine himself to treatises of the accepted form.

But the author answers no, for such
treatises would not
reach the greater number, and his
purpose would then
remain unfulfilled. To reach them he must
approach them
in the only literary form for which they care:
he must
embody his views in novels. " I have, in my
estimation,"
said Zola, " certain contributions to make to
the thought
of the world on certain subjects, and I have
chosen the